

NORTH WITCHFORD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

A N N U A L R E P O R T

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year ended

31st December, 1968.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year ending 31st December, 1968.

The Lindens,
Doddington,
March, Cambs.
Tel: Doddington 206.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

On behalf of the late Dr. Cecil Thomas I beg to present to you my report for the year 1968 on the health condition of your district during that period.

I also present the Public Health Inspector's report.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

M. E. HOCKEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL PROVISION FOR HEALTH SERVICES.

(1) Public Health Committee.

This comprises the whole Council.

(2) Public Health Officers.

Medical Officer of Health - CECIL THOMAS, M.R.C.S., L.R.S.P.
(Deceased).
Public Health Inspector - JOHN METCALFE, M.R.S.H.

(3) Nursing in the Home.

Health Visitors are employed by the County Council, whilst the midwifery and home nursing services are provided on an agency basis by the Cambridgeshire & Isle of Ely County Nursing Association.

(4) Hospital.

Treatment for the majority of patients is available at the County Hospital, Doddington.

(5) Ambulance Facilities.

These are controlled by the County Council.

(6) Child Welfare.

Clinics are held once per month at Doddington and twice monthly at Manea.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The number of adults engaged on agricultural work continues to decrease with the drift towards factory employment in nearby towns. Seasonal employment on farm work is still available for many members of the female adult population and there are several vegetable pre-packing establishments in operation which provide employment for both males and females.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	24,701.
Population (estimates mid year by Registrar General) ...	4,550.
Number of inhabited houses	1,632.
Rateable Value	£114,745.
Estimated net product of a penny rate	£457.

The estimated population for mid year is below the figure for the census return in 1961 which was 4,737.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births.

Number	49.
Rate per 1000 population	10.77.

The birth rate for the previous year was 14.67.
The ratio of local birth rate to national rate 0.65.

Illegitimate Live births per cent of total live births	2.04.
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Still Births.

Number	2.
Rate per 1000 total live and still births. ...	39.21.

Total Live and Still Births.. ...	51.
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<u>Infant Deaths</u> (deaths under 1 year)	Nil.
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Infant Mortality Rates.

Total Infant deaths per 1000 total live births..	Nil.
Legitimate " " " " legitimate live births	Nil.
Illegitimate " " " " illegitimate " "	Nil.

Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1000 total live births)... ..	Nil.
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Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1000 total live births	Nil.
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Perinatal Mortality Rate (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1000 total live and still births)	39.21.
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Maternal Mortality (including abortion)

Number of deaths..	Nil.
Rate per 1000 total live and still births. ...	Nil.

Deaths in Area and Causes:

	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Malignant Neoplasm - Lung, Bronchus	1	1	2
Malignant Neoplasm - Breast	-	2	2
Other Malignant Neoplasms, etc.	1	1	2
Benign and unspecified Neoplasms	-	1	1
Diabetes Mellitus	-	1	1
Meningitis	1	1	2
Hypertensive Disease	1	-	1
Ischaemic Heart Disease	5	3	8
Other Forms of Heart Disease	4	4	8
Cerebrovascular Disease	3	4	7
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
Carried Forward	17	18	35

	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Brought Forward	17	18	35
Influenza	-	2	2
Pneumonia	2	-	2
Bronchitis and Emphysema	2	1	3
Other Disease of Respiratory System	-	1	1
Appendicitis	-	1	1
Symptoms and Ill-defined conditions	-	1	1
Motor Vehicle Accidents	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
	22	25	47
	<u>=</u>	<u>=</u>	<u>=</u>

The death rate for the Rural District in 1968 was 10.33 per 1,000 population compared with 14.25 for the previous year. The ratio rate to the national death rate is 0.90.

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

	<u>Total Notified.</u>
Pneumonia	10
Scarlet Fever	4
Measles	49
Shiga Dysentory	<u>3</u>
	66
	<u>=</u>

FOOD POISONING OUTBREAKS.

There was no cases of food poisoning notified in the Rural District during 1968.

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PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1968.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following are the numbers of visits and inspections carried out during 1968.

Improvement Grant Inspections	...	...	...	...	63.
Water Supply	...	...	...	...	3.
Drainage	...	...	...	...	38.
Fried Fish Shops.	...	...	...	...	3.
Caravans and Encampments	...	...	...	...	7.
Factory Acts Inspections (including building projects)	...	...	...	...	34.
Bakehouses..	...	...	...	...	2.
Sanitary Accommodation.	...	...	...	...	23.
Refuse Dumps	...	...	...	...	29.
Rodent Control..	...	...	...	...	71.
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	...	...	...	...	21.
Nightsoil Disposal	...	...	...	...	4.
Sewers, Sewage Disposal Works and Sewage Pumping Stations	...	...	...	...	362.
Dykes	...	...	...	...	23.
Buildings under Construction and Alteration	...	...	...	...	450.
New Drain Tests.	...	...	...	...	77.
Sewer Tests	...	...	...	...	3.
Petroleum Installations	...	...	...	...	4.
Poultry Farms and Piggeries..	...	...	...	...	3.
Offices Shops and Railway Premises.	...	...	...	...	33.
Manure and Rubbish Accumulations...	...	...	...	...	3.

INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES.

- (1) Number of houses inspected under Public Health Acts and Housing Consolidated Regulations (excluding Council Houses). ... 18.
- (2) Number of houses surveyed for Slum Clearance (not included in (1)) ... 6.
- (3) Number of inspections for the above purposes (1) and (2) (including re-inspections). ... 42.
- (4) Number of dwellings inspected under Rent Act, 1957... Nil.
- (5) Inspections of Verminous or Dirty Dwellings ... 1.
- (6) Number of Inspections and Visits to houses in connection with Improvement Grants... 63.
- (7) Number of Visits to Council Houses - Repairs, Maintenance, and complaints, etc. ... 1662.

MEAT AND FOOD INSPECTION.

Butchers' Shops...	...	...	...	...	10.
Grocers' Shops	...	...	...	...	17.
Ice Cream Premises (Retail)...	...	...	...	...	13.

HOUSING.

The Rural Council completed a small estate of 12 bungalows at Wimblington during 1968, which went a long way towards easing the waiting list for housing accommodation in the parish of Wimblington.

Thirty eight dwellings were built by private enterprise (mainly in Doddington and Wimblington) and there were a further 19 dwellings under construction at the end of the year.

Two new bungalows were erected by the Cambs. & Isle of Ely County Council to replace obsolete dwellings on smallholdings and three more bungalows were in course of erection at the end of the year.

Summary of the post war development in the Rural District:-

Rural District Council	244 dwellings.
County Council Departments	18 "
Drainage Boards	4 "
Hospital Board	2 "
Private Enterprise	247 "
Private Enterprise (Conversions)	<u>2</u> "
	<u>517</u>

Further progress was made on Slum Clearance as can be seen from the following figures:-

Demolition Orders Made	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Unfit houses including obsolete houses, demolished as result of Demolition Orders or voluntarily by owners	...	...	...	...	...	9.
Closing Orders made..	...	...	...	...	...	3.
Closing Orders revoked and Demolition Order Substituted	...	...	...	...	...	1.
Houses made fit and Closing Orders revoked	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Houses made fit and houses in which defects were remedied after informal action by District Council...	...	...	...	...	...	8.
after formal action by District Council	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Total number of dwellings demolished or closed during the period from 1st January, 1955 to 31st December, 1968	...	...	...	...	...	191.
Changes in Housing Stock.						
Other losses in housing during 1968.						
Demolished by owners						
(a) Redundant...	...	...	...	...	...	5.
(b) Redevelopment	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Changed to farm use.	...	...	...	...	...	4.
Merged with adjoining dwelling..	...	...	...	...	...	2.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.

Two applications for Discretionary improvement grants were received and approved in 1968, to the value of £659. 6. 6d.

Eighteen applications for Standard grants under the House Purchase and Housing Act, 1959, as amended by the Housing Acts, 1961 and 1964, were received and approved during the year; the total value of the grants approved amounted to £3,300. 3. 9d.

Six of these schemes, together with seventeen earlier schemes, were completed during 1968 and grants amounting to £3,716. 7. 4d. were paid.

The amenities provided under Improvement Grant schemes completed in 1968 were as follows:-

	<u>Standard.</u>
Baths	20
Wash basins	20
Hot water systems	21
Larders	8
Water closets	19

Eight of the above schemes included the higher type of standard grant and five included septic tank drainage disposal systems. One scheme also included bringing piped water to the dwelling for the first time.

63 inspections (including reinspections) were made at premises in respect of improvement schemes.

No application was received for Grant under Section 46 of the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1958, in connection with the erection of new dwellings by private enterprise.

BUILDING REGULATIONS.

98 plans were deposited with the Council under the Building Regulations and Town and Country Planning Acts. One plan was rejected. 450 inspections were made of premises in course of erection or alterations. 77 tests of new drains were carried out at various premises.

WATER SUPPLY.

The statutory Water Authority for the area is the Wisbech & District Water Board. 10 dwellings on the outskirts of the Rural District are served by Water Undertakings from other areas.

The following information is supplied at the request of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government:-

(i) There has been a plentiful supply of water throughout the area served by Board's mains and there have been no complaints as to quality of the water supplied by the Board.

(ii) Normally routine independent sampling of piped water supplied is not carried out by the Council, as the Water Board's Chemist carries out frequent bacteriological examinations of the mains water at selected sampling points.

(iii) No action by the Council was necessary in respect of contamination.

(iv) The local supply of water is not plumbo-solvent.

(v) Proportion of dwelling houses supplied from Public mains:-

<u>Parish</u>	<u>No. of Occupied Houses.</u>	<u>No. with mains water.</u>	<u>No without mains water.</u>	<u>Percentage Connected.</u>
Benwick	225	225	-	100.00.
Doddington	479	477	2	99.58.
Manea (including Welches Dam).	459	458	1	99.78.
Wimblington (including Stonea)	469	466	3	99.36.
	1632	1626	6	99.63
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Most of the few houses without mains water are situated so far from the nearest mains that it is not economically possible to take water to them.

For the following schedule of work carried out in North Witchford Rural District during 1968, and Water Analyses, I am indebted to Mr. Cyril Llanwarne, B.Sc.Tech., A.M.I.C.E., A.M.I.W.E., Water Engineer, Mr. J. S. Collins, Chemist and Bacteriologist of the Wisbech and District Water Board:-

New Mains Laid:

King Street Housing Site, Wimblington. 107 yards 3" P.V.C.

Additional Domestic Properties Supplied:

Doddington	19
Wimblington	34
Benwick	2
Stonea	<u>3</u>
	58
	<u>=</u>

Water Analyses 1968 - North Witchford Rural District.

In order to maintain a pure and wholesome supply to the district, frequent bacteriological examinations have been undertaken during 1968, on samples from the Board's sourceworks and the distribution system in this and adjoining areas. The results have been of a very high standard. Many chemical analyses have also been carried out.

All new mains were sterilised, samples taken and bacteriological examination made before the mains were put into service. No connections were permitted until the water in the mains was of the highest standard of purity.

A sample taken on the 31st December, 1968, from the 18" main at Marham Pumping Station (Marham mixed treated water) on which a fluoride estimation was carried out, had a fluoride content of 0.02 parts per million (as F).

There were no cases of contamination of the water supply in North Witchford Rural District during 1968.

Bacteriological Samples taken in North Witchford Rural District and adjoining areas.

Place of Sampling.	Total Tests Taken.	No. of Tests Negative.	No. of Tests Positive.	Percentage Negative Tests.
March	54	54	-	100%
Doddington	51	51	-	100%
Chatteris	140	140	-	100%
Manea	46	46	-	100%
Totals	291	291	-	100%

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Benwick has a modern separate sewerage system for foul drainage which has been in operation since mid 1963. Two samples of the effluent discharged at the disposal works were taken during the year by the Great Ouse River Board Authority and whilst one was satisfactory, the other one gave a rather high figure for suspended solids.

With the exception of a few houses out of reach of the sewers, the village of Manea is served by main drainage. Part of the village is served by a combined system laid in 1874 which was recently linked to new sewage disposal works with a storm water

overflow tank to divert flows in excess of 6DWF. New separate foul sewers serve the remainder of the village, some of which flow to the new disposal works at Town Lots and the remainder discharge to modernised sewage works at Westfield Road. Two samples of effluent were taken by the River Board from Town Lots, one being very satisfactory and the other which coincided with an operation by cleaning out the land treatment beds gave an unsatisfactory result due to disturbance of sediment. Three samples were collected at Westfield Road, the first being unsatisfactory and the remainder being up to the required standard. Work was commenced on the construction of land treatment beds at Westfield Road which no doubt has led to the improvement in the effluent.

As regards the villages of Doddington and Wimblington early in the year the Rural District Council accepted the tender submitted by H.O. Andrews Ltd. for a new sewerage scheme for the villages of Doddington and Wimblington and the construction of a new Sewage Disposal Works for the sum of £374,000. excluding the cost of land and Consultants fees and supervision costs. The scheme provides for new foul sewers in the two villages and includes areas not previously sewered and at present served by cesspool drainage. The scheme includes six pumping stations and also four screw pumps, the latter have been introduced together with variations in sewer routes and levels to enable a substantial portion of the new sewers to be laid by the Badger Major fully automatic pipe layer. This is a new system employing the badgering technique for placing plastic and p.v.c. pipes deep in the ground for sewerage and water supply projects. This new system resulted in extremely rapid progress in the laying of lines of sewers over fields where there were no junctions to be inserted for house connections. In the built-up areas most of the sewer laying has been carried out by traditional methods although some lengths of new sewer have been "Badgered" in highways. Most of the pumping mains have been laid by a smaller addition of the Badger known as the Badger Minor. By the end of the year 11,800 yards of 6" diameter and 300 yards of 9" diameter sewer had been laid and 158 manholes constructed. 2,134 yards of 4" diameter and 3,350 yards of 6" diameter p.v.c. pumping mains had also been laid. At the same time work was proceeding on the construction of the combined Sewage Disposal Works for the two villages. The value of the work certified at the end of 1968 totalled £326,000.

The advent of this Sewerage Scheme entailed the preparation and service of numerous Notices of Entry for the purpose of laying sewers and pumping mains through gardens and fields, also the investigation of complaints and the making of inspections as the work was proceeding. Altogether 239 visits were made during the year in connection with this new Sewerage Scheme.

The Council continued the operation of emptying cesspools and septic tanks at houses not served by existing sewers, this service is carried out by a local Contractor and one free emptying per annum is allowed. In addition pail closets at houses not on sewer lines are also emptied by Contractors.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Nightsoil, which is collected by contractors, is composted with straw for use as manure on arable land. The contracts provide for three collections of closet pails per fortnight, the number of closets being dealt with at the end of the year was 67. The number of pail closets converted to water closets in 1968 was 18 and 11 of these conversions formed part of improvement grant schemes.

Closet Conversions 1968.

<u>Village.</u>	<u>Improvement Grant Schemes.</u>	<u>Others.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Benwick	2	-	2
Doddington	4	-	4
Manea	4	5	9
Wimblington (with Stonea)	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
	11	7	18
	<u>==</u>	<u>==</u>	<u>==</u>

The following table shows the progress of closet conversions during the past 11 years:-

	<u>Grant Schemes.</u>	<u>Others.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Previously reported			
1956 to 1967	135	254	389
1968	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>18</u>
	146	261	407
	<u>==</u>	<u>==</u>	<u>==</u>

Cesspools and vaults are emptied upon request from occupiers by one of the Contractors, who uses two cesspool emptiers for this purpose. The contents are disposed of at the nightsoil tipping points.

REFUSE COLLECTION.

Household refuse is collected from the built up areas of the villages (including the roads between the villages) once every fortnight by two separate Contractors employing the kerbside method. Certain sparsely populated outlying areas, namely Forty Foot Bank, Doddington; Floods Ferry Road, Bemwick; Purls Bridge and Fifties Road, Manea, are given a collection every four weeks. The refuse is disposed in disused gravel pits and covered with soil.

MILK SUPPLY.

The whole of the Council's district is within a "designated area" for the supply of milk, which in the main is distributed by two firms operating from dairies outside the Council's area. There are two local persons also retailing milk in the district.

MEAT AND OTHER FOOD INSPECTION.

There are now no licensed slaughterhouses in the Rural District, the seven butchers who have shops in the Area have the animals they purchase slaughtered in the Urban Districts of March, Chatteris and St. Ives.

FOOD PREMISES.

(i) The number of food premises in the area is as follows:-

Grocers, general provision stores and confectioners	17
Butchers	7
Bakers and Confectioners..	5
Fried Fish Shops	4
Cold Stores... ..	1
Cafes... ..	1
Licensed Premises... ..	11

(ii) 17 premises are registered under Section 16 of the Food & Drugs Act, 1955, for the sale of ice cream. No ice cream is manufactured in the area and all the retailers sell pre-packed ice cream, which in every case is stored in proper refrigerator cabinets. There are no dairies in the District.

- (iii) 13 inspections of registered food premises were made during the year. 3 inspections were made at the Cold Stores at Doddington for examination of various foods.
- (iv) No new educational activity was undertaken during the year.
- (v) Condemned tinstuffs are normally disposed of by burial at the refuse dumps.
- (vi) One examination of a whole consignment of frozen chips was carried out at the Cold Stores and samples submitted to the Food & Drugs Authority who reported that the chips were fit for human consumption.
- (vii) There are no ice cream manufacturers in the area.
- (viii) 29 visits were made of food premises during the year. Byelaws for handling food were adopted by the Council in 1951 under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act 1938.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

There are no large caravan sites in the Council's area as the County Planning Authority has adopted a rigid policy requiring caravans to be located on a central site. There is one Site Licence in operation for a single caravan. Temporary encampments occupied by seasonal agricultural workers give rise to some trouble due to spreading litter on the sites and failure to provide adequate sanitary accommodation.

NOISE ABATEMENT ACT, 1960.

Complaints were received regarding two instances of unreasonable noise from industrial premises, one involving a grain drying and animal food preparation plant and the other concerned a workshop located in a built up area of a village. In the first mentioned case the owner agreed to install special equipment to minimise the noise in respect of which only one person made the objection.

RODENT CONTROL.

The Council do not possess the necessary staff to carry out rodent destruction work other than that confined to sewer dykes and refuse disposal tips. Owing to the pressure of other work it is not possible to devote much time to rodent control, but all complaints are investigated and the opportunity to check for the presence of vermin is taken when premises are visited in connection with other matters. Good liaison is maintained with the local officials of the Pest Department of the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food.

FACTORIES ACT, 1961.

Prescribed Particulars of the Administration of the Factories Act, 1961.

PART 1 OF THE ACT.

1 - INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health.

Premises. (1)	Number on Register. (2)	Number of		
		Inspection. (3)	Written Notices. (4)	Occupiers Prosecuted. (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities...	6	4	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by local Authority	20	13	1	-
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises).	11	17	1	-
Total.....	37	34	2	-

2 - Cases in which DEFECTS were found

Particulars (1)	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted (6)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred to To H.M. Inspector (4)	By H.M. Inspector. (5)	
Want of cleanliness (S.1.).....	2	1	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S.2.)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable Temperature (S.3)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate Ventilation (S.4).	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage to floors (S.6.)....	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	2	1	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective.....	-	-	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes.....	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork).....	-	-	-	-	-
Total	3	2	-	-	-

PART VIII OF THE ACT

Outwork

Section 133 and 134)

Notification of one outworker living in the Council's area was received in 1968.

THE OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963.

The following table sets out the information returned to the Ministry of Labour in connection with the above Act which came into operation in 1964.

TABLE A.
REGISTRATIONS AND GENERAL INSPECTIONS.

(1) Class of Premises	(2) Premises Registered during the year.	Total Registered premises end of year.	Registered premises recei ing general inspection dur ing the year.
Offices.....	-	8	6
Retail shops.....	-	20	14
Wholesale shops, warehouses	-	-	-
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens.	-	1	1
Fuel storage depots.....	-	1	1
Totals	-	30	22

TABLE B.

NUMBER OF VISITS OF ALL KINDS BY INSPECTORS TO REGISTERED PREMISES.

33

TABLE C.

ANALYSIS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN REGISTERED PREMISES BY WORKPLACE

Class of workplace	Number of persons employed.
(1)	(2)
Offices.....	20
Retail shops.....	37
Wholesale departments, warehouses.....	-
Catering establishments open to the public.....	2
Canteens.....	-
Fuel storage depots.....	2
Total	61
Total Males	22
Total Females	39

J. METCALFE,

Public Health Inspector.

